

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

From Seed to Harvest: A beginner's guide to growing leeks

Similar to an onion but with a sweeter flavor, leeks make a great addition to salads and soups. The vegetable is hardy and can often be grown in cooler climates.

To plant:

Leeks are easy to grow, but they do take time. Start indoors eight to 10 weeks before the last frost dates and sow seeds $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep and $\frac{1}{2}$ inch apart in flats. Around the last frost date, transplant them outside and plant them 4 to 8 inches deep and 4 to 6 inches apart in rows set 20 inches apart. Plant so only a few inches of the leaves show above the soil. To sow outdoors directly, plant four weeks before the last frost. Plant seeds $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep and 1 inch apart in rows set 20 inches apart. When growth occurs, thin to 4 to 6 inches.

To grow:

Leeks do best in soils with a pH of 6.2 to 6.8. Grow leeks near carrots, celery, beets and onions. Do not plant them near beans and peas. Provide plentiful, even watering for a better crop. Since leeks have shallow roots, they require lots of water and a weed-free environment. Add mulch to retain moisture and deter weeds.

To harvest:

Leeks are ready to harvest in the late summer or early fall, and the whole plant should be harvested. To harvest, loosen the soil and then lift the leeks out by the roots so you don't damage the plant. Pick what you need until a freeze is suspected to hit, then harvest all the leeks.

What leeks crave:

Leeks like fertile soil. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of organic fertilizer or compost when planting.



[King Richard Leek seeds available at ufseeds.com](http://ufseeds.com)

A season prior to planting, add compost where the leeks will grow. After planting, feed the leeks every week with liquid fertilizer.

Where to buy leek seeds:

Check out Urban Farmer to buy leek seeds at ufseeds.com!



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